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From March 7th to 11th, 1987

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Review

Final thoughts on the Academy

As the "Fosters, Rogers, Stirling" exhibition draws to a close on December 21, BD publishes the last reviews.

Christopher Knight

WHICH is the more star-struck — the Royal Academy or its three superstars themselves, dazzled by their own brilliance in an otherwise apparently starless sky?

The public is led to believe in them as supermen able to conceive the design and direct the execution of giant projects single-handed. But a good building, as Corbusier said, is many men thick. Here we see nobody else.

Yet in the 1980s the individual designer has less control, and the creation of a building of architectural quality is more than ever a collective process. Post-Modern tackiness is a feeble reaction to this.

In this show the public is given no explanation of the design process in general or of the particular works displayed, ordained and constrained as they were by clients, cash, and politics. The three built projects at least demonstrate that compromise is not inevitable, or can at least be well-concealed. The three unbuilt schemes tell another story if you stop to think.

The exhibition is subliminal propaganda for an anachronistic concept of the architect as artist, yet it does nothing to explain the architectural thought which crystallises the client's brief. The public can easily understand and worldly constrain the architecture.

Christopher Knight is an architect in West London.

Tony Forward

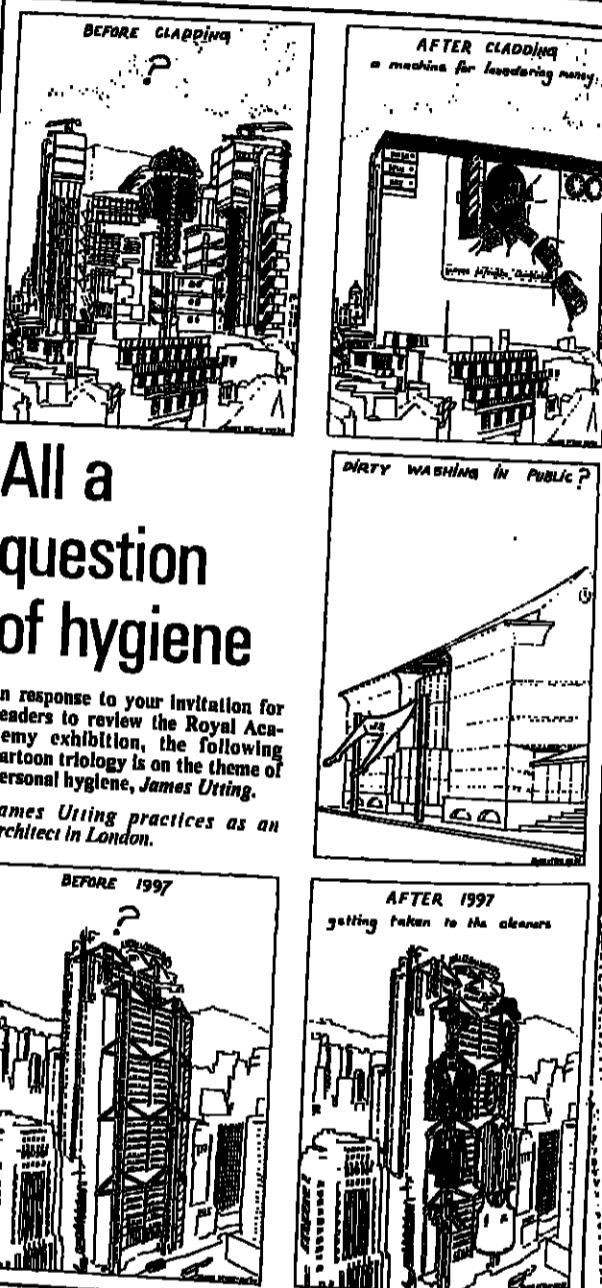
THREE cheers for the Royal Academy — and for the exhibition sponsors — for putting on a major architectural exhibition which is attracting the general public and not just professionals.

Foster's show is brilliantly attractive — not only the immaculate models that one expects, but beautiful images of the Hongkong & Shanghai Bank changing rhythmically on an array of five large screens, accompanied by evocative Chinese music. No wonder the seats opposite the screens are filled by a contented clientele, their senses soothed by seductive sound and vision. But Foster's second room is the more interesting. Here, again with the aid of superb models, we are reminded of a sad setback which occurred in 1985 when the BBC chickened out of building the new broadcasting centre.

Lost opportunity is also apparent in Rogers' room, in the spectacular model of "London as it could be"; his bold idea of a pedestrian route from Piccadilly Circus to Waterloo shows what conviction could achieve — but given the prevailing commercial context what hope is there of implementation?

As for Stirling, the massive mock-up of the Staatsgalerie is the key, with its ant-like population crowding the wide river-terraces of a London as it could be with the South Bank dissected by Hungerford Bridge and embellished with a spidery skyline structure wildly out of scale with its function and the avowed humanistic aims of the proposal.

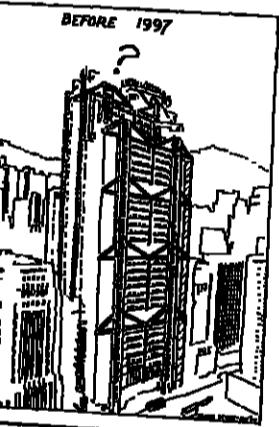
Stirling assures us that the only way to appreciate the



All a question of hygiene

In response to your invitation for readers to review the Royal Academy exhibition, the following cartoon trilogy is on the theme of personal hygiene, James Utting.

James Utting practices as an architect in London.



subtlety, wit and imagination which Venturi will surely find hard to rival.

Tony Forward is the head of the school of architecture at Huddersfield Polytechnic.

Kenneth Lynn
THIS is the exhibition through which the public's currently jaundiced view of architecture is to be transformed into something more appreciative.

By all accounts the public is giving it every chance, thronging the three galleries in the hopeful search for a common wavelength on which to tune into this widely-debated and much-maligned commodity, and to reassess its relevance to their lives. If only the exhibition could meet them half-way...

Three stars shine in the octagonal ante-room, Rogers', Stirling's and Foster's potted biographies shed little light on the remote worlds of their displays.

In Rogers' room, remoteness is the key, with its ant-like population crowding the wide river-terraces of a London as it could be with the South Bank dissected by Hungerford Bridge and embellished with a spidery skyline structure wildly out of scale with its function and the avowed humanistic aims of the proposal.

Stirling assures us that the

Staatsgalerie is to visit the actual building. The giant backlit photographs are almost sufficiently alive with colour and movement to give the impression of being there, but the illusion is fatally compromised.

The scale of the building is confusing. Surely that undulating wall should be twice as high as it is, and the monumentality of the cladding is dwarfed by the size of the coloured-pipe "hand" — rails whose 12-inch diameter not even Big Jim could comfortably grasp. The architectural allusions are too arcane for the thousands of visitors who pass daily through its repertoire of architectural in-jokes.

Finally Foster, whose hi-tech expertise fails to illuminate his texts. A multi-screen slide-show recreates the bustling atmosphere of Hong Kong, and semi-oriental muzak accompanies the majestic rise of the mega-structure. The huge model is perched perversely high, converging the customary bird's-eye view into a frustrating worm's-eye view.

A mature woman, pondering the rotating model of Lloyd's HQ, rejected the palliatives proffered by her young companion.

"Well", came the last-ditch attempt at justification, "it's designed to last for only 50 years".

Kenneth Lynn is an architect in Chatham.

Scorpio

An arachnid guide to 1986

Quotes of the year

"I wanted to be an opera singer." — James Stirling at Colorado.

"Designing buildings can be so stressful." — Robert Venturi at the Savoy.

"I believe there is still a future for stone — for if I can dress stone why can't others?" Nicholas Ridley at the RIBA conference.

"We are satisfied that our approach to the project will provide an appropriate building." The BBC on the designs for its new headquarters.

"I think it is time to resurrect the principles by which classical Greece operated." — Prince Charles at the "Building Communities" conference.

"...the Rambo architecture of Europe's tallest building." Ian Latham on Canary Wharf Tower.

"It's a clear case of money versus architecture." — Stuart Lipton on rival designs for Spitalfields.

Fashions

In

Dealing floors
Going public
Brasseries
Inner cities
UDCs
The green belt
Fund-raising
Community groups
Foster's office furniture
New spirit
Surrey Docks
Loft conversions

Walkways
Labour authorities
Cocktail bars
Covent Garden
The PSA
Conservationists
Grants
ISAA
The Barcelona Chair
Post-modernism
The Isle of Dogs
Jacuzzis

Disasters

Hull Cudat
The Architect
Portsdown estate
Grand Buildings
The M25
The Roundhouse
Leicester Square
The BBC

Community architecture
Building Design
Divis demolition
Aston University
The M25
The Alhambra
Charing Cross
Covent Garden

People

In

Nicholas Ridley
Leon Krier
Coin Street builders
Paul Getty II
Brian Barnes
Rod Hackney
James Stirling
Sam Webb
Jane Priestman

Kenneth Baker
Richard MacCormac
Richard Rogers
Frederick Koch
Prince Charles
Raymond Andrews
Powell and Moya
Alice Coleman
Terence Conran

Messages

Farewell

GLC architects
Stuart Murphy
Ronan Point
NELP
Huddersfield
David Pearce
Jonathan Glancey
Hilary King
Elephanta (Briefly)
John Harris (maybe)

The Lloyd's building
Hongkong Bank
The London Residuary Body
Acanthus
Inner City Aid
Thomas Cooke
Clare Gallery
USM quotes
London Advisory Committee
Philip Johnson

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The storage section of the CXT

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The economy of night storage... and the flexibility of daytime top-up

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automatically with an E pack

electronic 'brain'. There's three models of CXT,

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convector outputs up to 2.25kW. The new CXT

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The economy of night storage... and the flexibility of daytime top-up

heaters 'tops up' when necessary, to maintain the chosen room level, economically. The convector can also be used independently. Like the renowned Dimplex X1 storage heaters, the CXT can be upgraded automatically with an E pack electronic 'brain'. There's three models of CXT, with storage loadings up to 3.4kW and convector outputs up to 2.25kW. The new CXT from Dimplex gives you maximum economy and maximum flexibility. It's a tempting combination of two heaters in one — and it's yours for the taking!

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Christmas

PLAYING WITH PHILOSOPHY

Christmas is synonymous with toys. Brian Hatton, in festive spirit, muses on their architectural implications.

"I THINK that children generally do exert influence on their toys, that their choice is directed by inclinations and desires, which, however, vague and unformulated, are nevertheless, very real. Still, I would not deny the contrary, that is to say, that toys act upon the child, particularly upon one with literary or artistic inclinations. One would hardly be surprised to see a child of that sort, whose parents take him to the theatre, already coming to consider the theatre as beauty in its most entrancing form."

Those words were written by Charles Baudelaire in his essay of 1859, "La morale du jouet" (The ethic of the toy). They remind me of remarks attributed to Churchill on the rebuilding of the House of Commons: "We influence the shape of the buildings around us, and they in turn influence us".

It is not mistaken then to see toys as the imaginative architecture of childhood and to look among them for signs of the obsessions and dilemmas of the adult environment.

Although Baudelaire went on in his essay to discuss those "philosophical toys" using scientific optical devices that prefigured the kinematograph, his reference to the theatre as the epiphany of art then was germane, for there was perhaps no "ambitious" toy of the 19th century so popular among well-to-do families as the juvenile drama, performed in darkened sitting-rooms within cardboard proscenium and printed cut-out figures.

Such miniature theatre was a toy within a toy, for it placed within the game of architecture the game of play-acting, and the cry that all the world's a stage referred in this case to all the toy world. For the striking thing about the toy-world as we find it in such toy museums as Pollock's in Scala Street (which grew originally out of a factory for toy theatres) and the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood is the degree to which it replicates every aspect of the adult world. If this universality is not reflected in most toyshops, it is a measure of the cliché-ridden impoverishment of today's commercial imagination, obsessed with Barbie-Doll look-alikes and Star Wars clones.

Even where a wider range of life is evoked by toys, the imitation is literal, stereotypical, and stifling to imaginative participation.

This was the criticism made of modern toys by Roland Barthes in the essay he included on them in his anthology *Mythologies*. For Barthes the curse of toys today is that they always mean something, their inbuilt meanings foreclosing on the child's imagination, defining identities in advance and determining the social anticipations of the user: "Faced with this world of faithful and complicated objects, the child can only identify himself as owner, as user, never as creator, he does

Behind this might be discerned a reflection on the debate about Modernism and its after-

math. Frank Lloyd Wright, as is well known, was given Froebel toy blocks as a child and later admitted their influence. There is no doubt of the "philosophic" value of their abstract architecture to Wright; moreover, abstract blocks of a comparable kind were developed as toys by the Bauhaus.

Barthes wants toys to liberate children from ready-made social meanings by means of freely adaptive and inventive bricolage, subject to no sovereignty but an autonomous imagination bent on discovery: "The merest set of blocks, provided it is not too refined, implies a very different learning of the world; then, the child does not in any way create meaningful objects, it matters little to him whether they have an adult name; the actions he performs are not those of a user but a demiurge. He creates forms which walk, which roll, he creates life, not property."

However, in one respect, Barthes' remarks seem limited in a way characteristic of when he wrote them (the mid 80s). I wonder if he would still hold them today in an era of "poststructuralism".

It is an aspect with bearings not only on toys and toy architecture, but on the real thing. It is to do with the abstraction implicit in his preference for simple blocks. For it is not necessary, in order to escape the continuities of social stereotyping, to resort to what Barthes termed the "zero-degree" of signification, that is, abstraction.

The imagination can subvert, divert, pervert, invert, and revert the sign; it can take one thing intended for a purpose and use it as or for something else. In the words of the American artist Jasper Johns: "One thing used as another, one thing made of another". The cases of Picasso making a bull's head of a bicycle saddle and handlebars and casting a monkey from moulds of a toy motor car are well-known, but it is the kind of thing that any imaginative child does.

Of course, if a child does, as I did when young, turn a toy tractor upside down to become a galley or paddleboat, you may say that one social meaning is merely being changed to another. But no negation can be complete; what counts is the increment in what might be called the coefficient of imaginative sovereignty — and sheer joy — that comes with such a recycling.

Behind this might be discerned a reflection on the debate about Modernism and its after-

math.

English doll's house, c1760 with some later furnishings.



A time for giving and reinforcing my and stereotypes.



Wings and characters from toy theatre sheets in Pollock's Toy Museum.

Christmas

collection of houses and theatres in the Bethnal Green museum will indicate that, for the child playing with these toys, the whole interest and motivation in them springs from the fictions, ceremonies and narratives conjured among the equipment and miniature utensils of the interior. Spatial division of the dolls' houses at Bethnal Green is quite rudimentary, even when the exterior is grandly designed and exquisitely built.

The priority of the interior narrative in toy architecture was something that was rather overlooked in a notable competition for architects' dolls' houses run by *Architectural Design* a couple of years ago and published as *AD No 53*.

One of the few entrants to identify the priority in dolls' houses was Francis de Vallee, who wrote: "It quickly became evident to me that it is the contents of the dolls' house that forms the basis of the child's games and the stories he acts out with his dolls. It was therefore obvious that the whole process of architectural creation had to be reversed, in that the first step was to choose the objects that would create the living environment and only then could I design a structure to house them in."

De Vallee was also one of the few entrants to explore the possibility that toys do not need to be representational or in scale; that a soap holder can be a TV set, a spring a staircase, a cheese grater a fireplace. This adaptation, to me, is the essence of toymaking as it is of art. One of the few others to do this was Jean Nouvel, who made a folding tool-box into a portable doll's house. On the other hand, the sense of private narrative can be elaborated to the point of ritual, as it was in an exquisite Japanese entry, which looked like a shrine or tabernacle. If this recalled any kind of toy house, it was like a ceremonial urn in the form of a primordial dwelling of the kind discussed by Joseph Rykwert in *On Adam's House in Paradise*.

The expressionists were an exception, but few of their ideas, such as Bruno Taut's presentation of *Frihleicht* magazine of allotment huts as proletarian Wendy Houses, got very far. My point is not that architects aren't influenced by childhood ideas, but that they don't readily admit it. It is arguable, for instance, that the most childlike architectural movement at present is the hi-tech work of architects such as Richard Rogers. It is really much more than a fascination with Meccano and bits that "work".

If one goes to a toyshop one sees in caricature and miniature the whole dilemma of contemporary architectural culture. Representation of the built environment in toymodel falls into two incompatible categories. On the one hand there is the deathless iconography of late Victorian England: land of steam railways, parish churches, and timber halls. On the other hand there is the cacophony of pseudo-technology: gizmos, space invaders, programmable robots, and computer graphics whose only iconography or human reference is to a sort of juvenile *Mad Max*. If anybody doesn't believe that there is a deep crisis in the culture, take a trip to a toyshop.

There are some toys that have tried to resolve the cultural schizophrenia and the Lego firm makes one of them. It recently organised an exhibition of structures built by invited architects under a title from Le Corbusier: "Architecture is a Magnificent Game". The results were astonishingly varied and inventive. Yet I have to say that none escaped a certain stilted quality that seems endemic to readymade systems.

In the end the complaint of Barthes, that too many manufactured toys tend towards stereotyping, holds. It is as getting beyond readymade and prefabricated - modules - whether they are structural components, as in hi-tech, or packaged signifiers and semiotic components, as in post-modern.

If toys are ceasing to refer to real life, architecture is approaching the condition of a toy, and a not very philosophical one at that.

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BD 19/12

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English doll's house, 1940.

Annual review

BUILDINGS OF THE YEAR



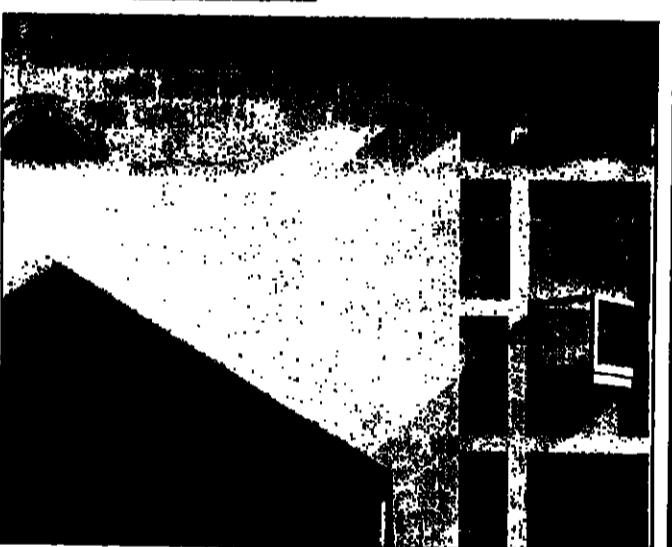
Jeremy Dixon's masterful proposal for the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden (right), a competition he won with Building Design Partnership, await planning approval and funding. The scheme will update the opera house facilities and backstage areas, reinstate a colonnade in the northeast corner of the plaza, provide a new entrance and grand spiral stairs and shopping and office space for rental.

Richard Rogers & Partners' new headquarters for Lloyd's of London (left) was completed to a somewhat mixed reception, apart, that is, from a sycophantic special number of the *Architectural Review*. The building is nonetheless a tremendous achievement for both architects and builders and represents a solitary symbol in the City of London of the potential of late 20th century architecture. Magnificent models by Tetra of Lloyd's are featured in the "Foster, Rogers, Stirling" show at the Royal Academy that closes on Sunday.



Peter Palumbo bounced back after the rejection of his Miles tower at Mansion House with twin proposals by James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates, one of which retained the corner Stirling and Webb building (left) at the expense of a squat tower at the back of the site.

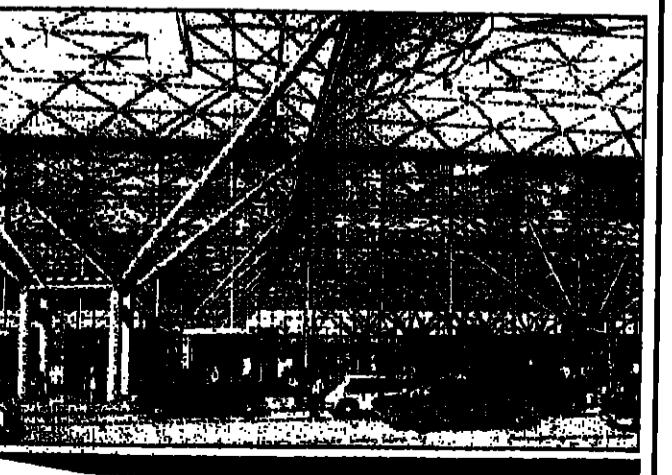
Stirling is currently adjusting the scheme to account for overshadowing objections from neighbouring building owners.



The Clore Gallery for the Turner collection at the Tate (above), designed by James Stirling, Michael Wilford & Associates, was finally completed and the rich collection is currently being hung. The Royal opening in the Spring. The Clore is the best new gallery in London for many years and it will doubtless draw crowds to the Tate. The project is the first phase of Stirling's grand plan for the New Museums to be built incrementally over the next decade, resulting in a complex of a scale that matches Stirling's international status.

Foster Associates finished the spectacular Hongkong & Shanghai Bank (left), a magnificent and necessarily expensive combination of craftsmanship and technology. They unveiled proposals for the terminal at Stansted airport (below), a building type that seems to offer Foster the ideal vehicle for his architectural preoccupations.

The ill-fated BBC radio headquarters in Langham Place by Foster Associates was shown in public, long after the project's cancellation in favour of a package deal on the White City site. The Royal Academy show featured numerous trial missing models revealing the pains to which the practice had gone to come to terms with the difficult urban context.



CASE HISTORY: YNYSYBWL, PONTYPRIDD

Civic Shield gets the "thumbs up" from Wales and West.

Of the 3,000 or so dwellings owned by Wales and West Housing Association, the 36 flats and 10 houses at Ynysybwl, near Pontypridd, were a cause for concern.

The severe weather conditions in this Welsh valley had made the mould and condensation problems even worse.

So it was these 46 dwellings which Wales and West chose as their pilot scheme for adopting the Electricity Board's Civic Shield Award.

As is usual with this scheme, the work involved minimum fuss and disturbance so it wasn't necessary for the tenants to be moved out.

In just two months, from January to March 1983, all 46 homes had been upgraded to the Electricity Board's Civic Shield Award standards.

By converting the homes to the Economy 7 tariff, improving the insulation, installing new style heaters and converting the water



heating to Economy 7, they became warm and comfortable with affordable running costs — plus very happy tenants and an ecstatic housing manager into the bargain.

Consequently, Wales and West actually found themselves faced with a waiting list for homes which had previously been as hard to let as they were to heat.

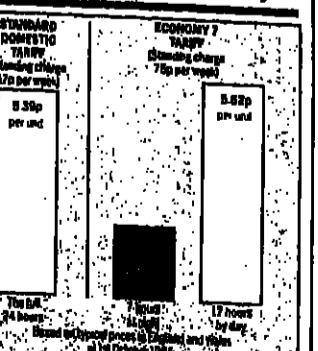
Their pleasure at the cost-effectiveness of the whole package — from installation right through

to operation — speaks for itself: by 1985, all Wales and West's 800 dwellings in the South Wales Electricity Board area had been upgraded in accordance with DEN 3 guidelines and had received the Civic Shield Award.

In fact, they have now completed the upgrading of all their electrically heated homes.

As usual, the homes weren't the only things we converted!

Less than half price electricity from Economy 7.



Economy 7 night time electricity is less than half price compared with today's standard domestic rate. So it actually saves money on heating and water heating.

The adjacent diagram shows you how Economy 7 works.

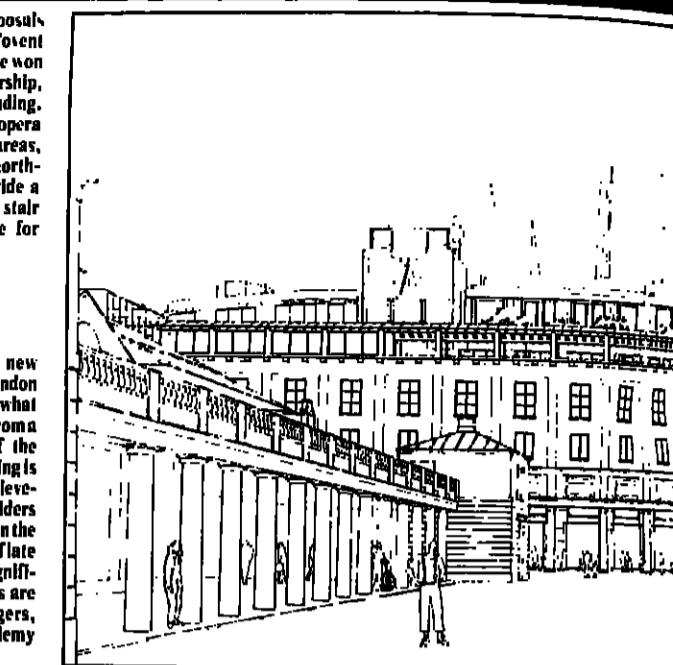
Whereas the standard domestic tariff has a single rate for units used, the Economy 7 tariff has two rates — one for day, another for seven hours at night.

Tenants are able to get cheap heating because the stylish new slimline storage heaters take in heat overnight during the cheap

Economy 7 period, and the efficient insulation enables it to be stored. The heaters then give out heat gradually throughout the day, to keep the homes comfortable and warm.

Likewise, the Economy 7 hot water cylinder takes full advantage of the overnight cheap rate electricity by switching on automatically during the night. So in the morning, there's a whole tankful of hot water heated at the cheap rate to provide the bulk of tenants' household needs during the day.

For more information on DEN 3 and Civic Shield, call your Electricity Board contact below:
LONDON Cliff Hall, 01-242 9050; SOUTH-EAST Iain Ramsey, Brighton 724522; SOUTHERN Stuart Holmes, Littlewick Green 2166; SOUTH WEST Chris Hogg, Bristol 266062; SOUTH WALES Robert Hockey, Cardiff 792111; EASTERN Ivor Pederson, Ipswich 688698; EAST MIDLANDS John Elliott, Nottingham 269711; MIDLANDS Eric Whitt, 021-422 4000; MERSEYSIDE & NORTH WALES Malcolm Cooper, Chester 377111; NORTH EAST Colin Howarth, 061-834 8161.



The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre (above) was completed by Powell & Moya opposite Westminster Abbey. Elegant and dignified externally, there was criticism that the interior spaces and finishes didn't match up to the significance of the site and functions of the building.

BD chance upon detailed proposals for Canary Wharf Tower, the 260m centrepiece of the massive £3 billion development in the Isle of Dogs which now looks set to go ahead.

Designed by New York architects Kohn Pedersen Fox, who claim somewhat naively that their inspiration comes from the Houses of Parliament, this will be Europe's tallest tower, half as high again as the NatWest tower.

CIVIC SHIELD UPDATE

SPECIAL FEATURE

TRYDAN DE CYMRU
SOUTH WALES ELECTRICITY



Now these tenants are the envy of all their friends and relations.

After hearing about Civic Shield's success from the South Wales District Energy Marketing Engineer, Monmouth District Council decided to install an Economy 7 heating package in one of their biggest problem areas — pre-fabricated homes with no proper heating system at all.

This insulation, combined with the introduction of the Economy 7 tariff, new-style storage heaters and the specially insulated Economy 7 hot water cylinders, has now made these homes and their tenants beautifully warm and comfortable.

The homes were freezing and, like most buildings of this type, there was the added problem in that the thin concrete external walls required extensive repair.

Monmouth District Council are so pleased, they'll consider the Civic Shield solution on all their pre-fabricated homes in future. To date, they have implemented it in over 300 homes, pre-fabricated and standards.

In fact, as this happy couple tell us, "All our friends and relations are very envious. Now they come round to us for a warm!"

Monmouth District Council are so pleased, they'll consider the Civic Shield solution on all their pre-fabricated homes in future. To date, they have implemented it in over 300 homes, pre-fabricated and standards.

Otherwise, at 32 different locations — and there are more to come —

1978 by the Joint Working Party on Heating and Energy Conservation in Public Sector Housing, for remedial work for existing electrically heated dwellings.

Economy 7 tariff, together with a tailor-made package of insulation measures.

Electricity Boards throughout

England and Wales have

considerable experience in implementing DEN 3 schemes, as over 250 satisfied Housing Associations and Local Authorities have already discovered.

Send off the coupon for your copy of the DEN 3 Book — and discover how we can help you.

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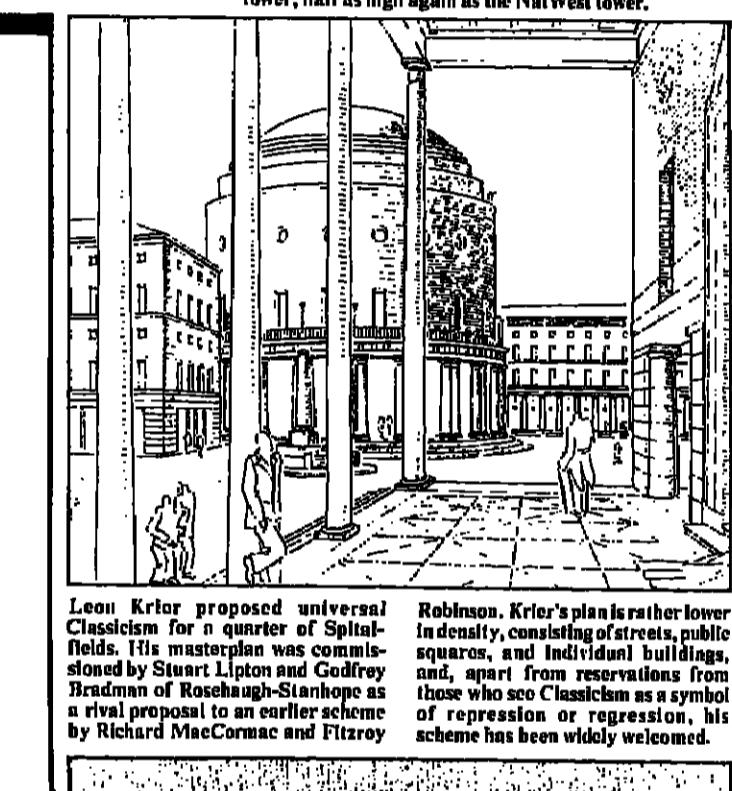
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CASE HISTORY: MONMOUTH



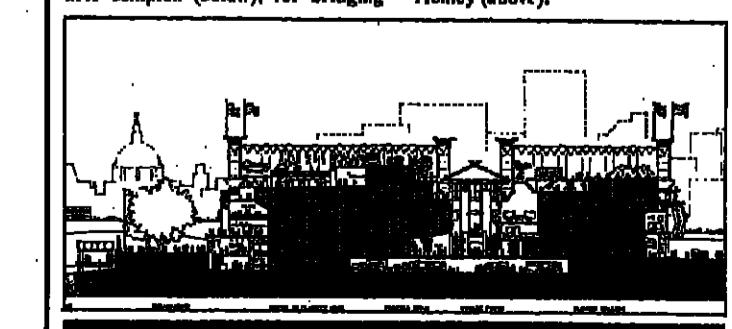
Leon Krier proposed universal Classicism for a quarter of Spitalfields. His masterplan was commissioned by Stuar Lipton and Godfrey Bradman of Rosehaugh-Stanhope as a rival proposal to an earlier scheme by Richard MacCormac and Fitarey.

Robinson, Krier's plan is rather less

in density, consisting of streets, public squares, and individual buildings, and, apart from reservations from those who see Classicism as a symbol of repression or regression, his scheme has been widely welcomed.



The Terry Farrell Partnership were among the most prominent of practices with headline-catching proposals for improving the South Bank arts complex (below), for bridging Henley (above).



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A Clerk of Works is required to supervise two buildings presently under construction on campus and further work in the University's development programme. This is a full time permanent appointment but short term contract employment would also be considered.

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Further particulars are available from the University of Surrey, Guildford, GU2 5XH, or by telephoning Guildford (0483) 509159.

Applications in the form of a Curriculum Vitae (2 copies) including the names and addresses of two referees should be sent to the Personnel Department. The closing date for this position is 19th December 1986.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Brian Clouston & Partners Ltd

announce that from 1st January 1987 Paul Young will retire from the Company in order to concentrate on a new joint venture. Further details will be announced in the New Year.

He will still be contactable through BCP Ltd office's where he will remain as a consultant.

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APPOINTMENTS

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Small mixed practice by Thames in SW, London seeks Architect & Technician. For further information telephone or write to:-
 John Cahill
 Bamsley Hewett & Mallinson
 The Studio, 1 Whitehart Lane
 Barnes SW13
 Tel: 01-878 4667

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ARCHITECTS

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 Troughton McAlester Architects
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE RING

MR K. J. WOJKOWSKI ON 01-234 4228

Application form and job description from City Architect's Department, Town Hall, Manchester, M60 1JY. Tel: 01-234 4208.

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£11271-£13671

(Bar at £12312)

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An essential car user's allowance will be paid. Applications from disabled persons are welcomed. Applications stating age, qualifications and experience, together with the names and addresses of two referees to the Regional Manpower Services Officer at the address below. Closing date for applications: 9th January, 1987.



**DUMFRIES
 & GALLOWAY**

Dumfries & Galloway Regional Council,
 Council Offices, Dumfries DG1 2DD.
 Telephone: (0387) 53141

Hull City Council

CITY ARCHITECTS DEPARTMENT

We are a progressive, multi-disciplinary department of 160 staff, serving one of the largest Boroughs in the UK. We are currently handling an annual building programme valued at £6m, and we shall shortly embark, upon an enhanced Housing programme worth £80m per year. We are therefore looking for talented and enthusiastic professionals to fill these newly created key management posts.

Principal Architects (3 Posts)

Post No CAB, 3, 9, PO 38-41 £13683-£14982
 We require Architects who can demonstrate a selection of qualities comprising ability, flair, maturity and proven management experience in an appropriate subject and four years relevant experience - or HNC, or an alternative qualification in an appropriate subject and two years' relevant experience or have obtained a Diploma in Environment Engineering from the Polytechnic of the South Bank, or have passed the RIBA's examination of the RICS.

Application form and job description from Regional Personnel Division, Gateway House, Piccadilly South, Manchester, M60 7LP. Tel: 061-236 9456 ext 2327. Please quote reference number B178/A. Closing date for receipt of completed application forms 12 noon Wednesday, 31 December, 1986.

THIS AUTHORITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

Principal Architect

Post No CA 17 PO 38-41 £13683-£14982
 We require an Architect of exceptional technical and management ability to establish and lead a team providing a specialist technical service to three main practice. The postholder will carry out research into and develop new techniques to facilitate the repair and development of the development stock and will be directly responsible for the development and implementation of a computer aided design system.

In addition the postholder will be responsible for the Assistant City Architect (Housing Programmes) and will ensure that technical and production information is available for the practice teams in order that deadlines are met.

You should wish to discuss the duties of the above posts contact Mr. I. Cokuhoun, City Architect, Tel: (0422) 222100 or Mr. A. George, Senior Principal Architect, Tel: (0422) 222112.

In appropriate cases the cost of removal and relocation expenses will be paid.

LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Landscape Clerk of Works (Temp) Post No. L843
 £3118-£10164. Career Grade + Car Allowance
 (Sterling salary dependent upon qualifications and experience)

The successful applicant will join an established professional group of 20. Duties will include day to day site inspection work on both hard and soft landscape projects.

Applicants should be conversant with horticultural techniques, plant identification and horticultural construction. An ability to instruct and control contractors and direct labour will be required and some surveying and drawing experience would be an advantage.

Candidates should possess an appropriate Horticultural or Landscape Institute qualification (e.g. O.N.D./O.N.C., Aromatic Horticultural, Relevant experience in horticultural or technical service could expect a starting salary of £7311).

This is a temporary post initially for a period of 12 months. A full driving licence is essential. The cost of removal and relocation expenses will be payable for these posts.

Application forms and further details are available from the City Manpower Officer, Municipal Office, Trippet Street, George Street, Kent, Tel. Ashford (0238) 37311, ext 407.

Closing date: 12th January 1987.

An Equal Opportunities Employer

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Closing date: 12th January 1987.

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Hampton Court fire system modified

MODIFICATIONS to Hampton Court's automatic fire detection system have been made and other improvements to security and management arrangements are also in operation.

The improvements the DoE has implemented are in response to the recommendations made by Sir John Garlick in his report, published in July, on last March's disastrous fire.

All the control panels to the fire systems have been modified so that switches cannot be left in the "reset" position, lockable covers have been installed and a memory facility has been incorporated.

The environment secretary, Nicholas Ridley announced the changes in a written reply to a Parliamentary question from Toby Jessie MP for Twickenham in whose constituency the palace lies.

Ridley admitted that the complexity of the new system had caused problems because procedures were not made sufficiently clear.

"The lessons we have learned will be applied at Hampton Court and at other buildings for which my department is responsible," said Ridley.

Better fire drills involving the fire brigade have taken place and arrangements have been made for more effective training with more provision of advice on the efficient operation of the fire system.

The Property Services Agency is checking fire detection systems installed in other government buildings and considering whether systems should be installed where none exist at present.

Sir John Garlick's report has also been sent to other interested bodies such as English Heritage and the National Trust.

DoE urges checks on overcladding to block fire hazards

FIRE risks inherent in overcladding systems for tower blocks have been identified in a new BRE report. The DoE has called for systems to be checked and recommended that fire barriers be fitted where appropriate.

The BRE's research has revealed that with some overcladding systems there is an increased risk of fire spread — especially vertical spread where

overcladding systems incorporate combustible elements.

Where such cladding is aluminium, BRE's lab tests have

shown that a fire within the cavity behind the cladding in the cavity can either be designed or "fortuitous" can melt the aluminium and burn through to the surface several storeys above.

The DoE has advised that both existing and proposed overcladding systems should be examined to see if modifications are needed.

It recommends that for completed overcladding systems made of aluminium with a combustible insulant, fire barriers should be fitted if a suitable opportunity arises.

For proposed sheet overcladding systems, local authorities should specify either non-combustible insulants or fire barriers every two storeys.

The only problem with this scheme is the existing tenants, excluding a handful who have exercised their right to buy, who may wish to stay.

But legislation which came into effect only weeks ago allows landlords such as local authorities and housing associations to move tenants out of a tower block into alternative accommodation whether they choose to leave or not.

The company may also be forced to sell further homes to help service the loans to buy the town.

Figures of around 100 homes a year have been mentioned together with a one third reduction in staff levels within five years. The company will be expected to break even within five years and already there are plans to raise rents by 15 per cent in April and for substantial service charge rises.

Thamesmead trust set to sell towers

FOUR lakeside residential tower blocks in Thamesmead may be sold to help finance the purchase of the town from the London Residential Body.

Thamesmead Town, the company chaired by Clive Thornton, was originally scheduled to take over from the LRB on January 1, but February 1 or April 1 look more likely as the two sides have failed to agree a price.

The LRB surveyor valued Thamesmead at £25 million but Thornton, with backing from the City, had only raised £10 million and it is believed negotiations had reached the £18 million mark.

Suggested methods of raising the extra cash have involved selling off housing with the four 12-storey blocks a prime candidate.

Each block contains 24 one-bedroom and 24 two-bedroom flats, in a lakeside setting. Refurbished by a private developer

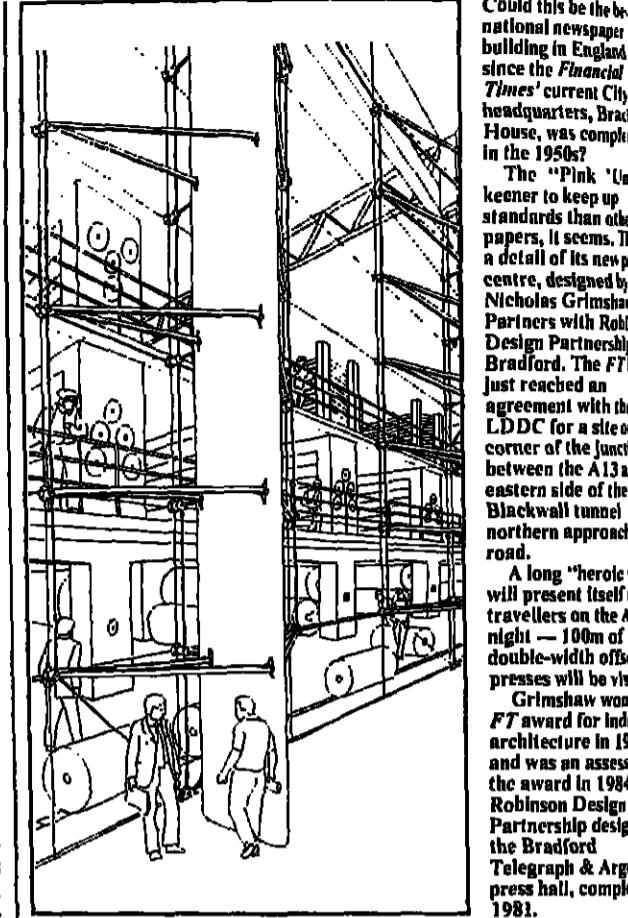
they could command handsome prices on the open market.

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Could this be the new national newspaper building in England, since the *Financial Times'* current City headquarters, Brad House, was completed in the 1980s?

The "Pink" (un)keeper to keep up standards higher than other papers, it seems. It's a detail of its new HQ centre, designed by Nicholas Grimshaw Partners with Robs Design Partnership, Bradford. The FT has just reached an agreement with the LDDC for a site on the corner of the junction between the A13 and eastern side of the Blackwall tunnel, northern approach road.

A long "herculean" will present itself to travellers on the A11 at night — 100m of double-width office presses will be visible.

Grimshaw won the FT award for industrial architecture in 1977, and was an assessed the award in 1984. Robinson Design Partnership designed the Bradford Telegraph & Argus press hall, completed 1981.

Whitechapel setback

Building optimism

A LOCALLY developed plan for Whitechapel has received a setback with the neighbourhood committee of councillors voting five to three in favour of a rival scheme proposed.

For rendered metal lathing systems using thermoplastic insulant, authorities should specify sufficient metal fasteners to stabilise the cladding and fit fire barriers every two storeys.

The final decision between Pengap, THET and a third scheme by Charterhall will be made by a full meeting of Tower Hamlets council at the end of January.

Fire barriers which also support the cladding should be specified for every storey where glass fabric reinforced thin renders with a thermoplastic insulant are used.

Copies of the report costing £25 are available from BRE, Garston, Watford WD2 7JR.

The best prospects appear to be in office construction, "unparalleled growth" of 12 per cent predicted in 1986 and 1987, and 5 per cent in 1988.

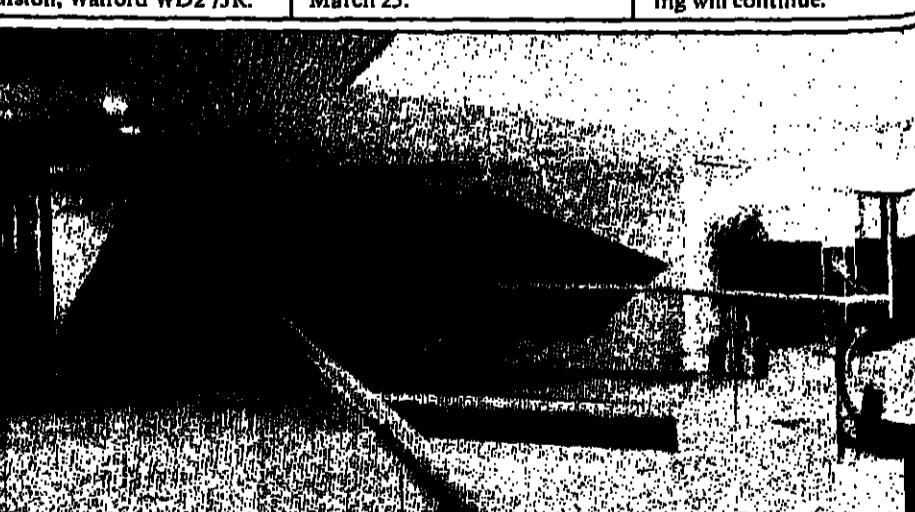
More modest growth of 3 per cent is forecast for private housing market year but public sector output is set to fall by 27 per cent between 1985 and 1988. The falling trend in industrial building will continue.

Diary date

THE receiving date for the Royal Scottish Academy summer exhibition next year will be March 23.



Newcastle College, Susan Bradbury, stained glass window.



BOC Group, Sol Le Witt, mural.

Mobil tops art awards

The second Art & Work Awards were won by Mobil North Sea, the BOC Group and Newcastle-upon-Tyne College of arts and technology. Richard Rogers presented the awards at the Royal Academy.

Mobil's prize, sponsored by developer Capital & Counties, was for the most outstanding contribution to art in the working environment.

BOC won the award for the art collection it has installed in its new headquarters at Windlesham. It includes works by Sol Le Witt and Gilbert & George. Space Planning Services sponsored the award.

Susan Bradbury's stained glass windows won the Newcastle college its award for a site-specific commission in the school of art and design, sponsored by IBM.

Art for Offices sponsored a special award which went to the Forestry Commission for the sculptors' working environment it has set up in Grizedale Forest and an outdoor theatre.



Mobil North Sea Limited, Brian Kelly, untitled.



Grizedale Forest, Richard Harris, Quarry Structure.

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